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[Online Version at FloridaBusiness.org](https://www.floridabusiness.org)

**COVID-19 Business Resource Center: [VolusiaBusinessResources.com](https://www.volusiabusinessresources.com)**

**VOLUSIA COUNTY EXPANDS COVID-19 SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM** – The Volusia County Council decided at its meeting last Tuesday to expand the COVID-19 small business assistance grant program to small businesses in Volusia County with up to 50 full-time employees. Businesses with between 26-50 full-time equivalents (FTEs) that meet the eligibility criteria, may qualify for a one-time grant of \$5,000. Businesses with up to 25 full-time FTEs that meet the eligibility criteria, may still qualify for a one-time grant of \$3,000. The county is using coronavirus relief funds it received from the federal government as part of the CARES Act to fund the grants. The application and a qualification criteria can be found on [the county's new Volusia Business Resources web site](https://www.volusiabusinessresources.com).

**CDC RELEASES DETAILED CORONAVIRUS GUIDELINES** – The CDC has released [detailed guidelines](https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2020/s110520-covid-19-guidelines.html) for reopening schools and businesses that have been shut down in the coronavirus pandemic. The 60-page document is named the CDC Activities and Initiatives Supporting the COVID-19 Response and the President's Plan for Opening America Up Again. The document includes specific guidance for reopening childcare centers, schools, businesses, restaurants and public transit. It also lays out steps for containing the disease at federal and state levels through contact tracing and monitoring for outbreaks.

**ALL 50 STATES POST UNEMPLOYMENT RATE INCREASES** – Unemployment rates were higher in April in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, the [U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported on Friday](https://www.bls.gov/news.release/archives/uea050120.pdf). Similarly, all 50 states and the District had jobless rate increases from a year earlier. The national unemployment rate rose by 10.3 percentage points over the month to 14.7% and was 11.1 points higher than in April 2019. Non-farm payroll employment decreased in all 50 states and the District in April 2020. Over the year, non-farm payroll employment decreased in all 50 states and the District.

**WEAPONIZING YOUR PLAN FOR TAX EFFICIENCY & ARMORING AGAINST COVID-19** – Before COVID-19, the company retirement plan was viewed as a necessary overhead expense to attract and retain talent. Generic, commodity style plans permeated the industry and no one was discussing how the plan could be weaponized to mitigate tax and enhance net worth for owners. Now, business owners have tremendous revenue and demographic uncertainties and their current plan could be a financial risk. GrowFL will host a [webinar that will cover foundational concepts and governing deadlines](https://www.growfl.com/webinars/2020/05/28/weaponizing-your-plan-for-tax-efficiency-and-armoring-against-covid-19) of how to amend the different commodity plan types to cut costs and hedge against revenue uncertainty in 2021. It will show how entrepreneurs who utilize a customized plan have more flexibility and predictability in their employee match and can shelter distribution income from tax. Lastly, the workshop will analyze the difference between proprietary mutual funds and institutional class mutual funds and chart the difference in return between the two when the market drops the way it did in March. The webinar is scheduled for 10 a.m. May 28.

**DISTRIBUTION HUBS TO BENEFIT FROM WAREHOUSE DEMAND INCREASE** – As the U.S. economy restarts, adjustments to business supply chains will increase the demand for warehouse space. This according to commercial real estate services firm, CBRE, Inc. It notes that the downward trend in inventory-to-sales ratios since the early 1990s could reverse as manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers store materials and products closer to manufacturing centers and consumers. Businesses may create more domestic supply chains as they re-shore or near-shore production. The COVID-19 crisis has underscored the fragility of just-in-time (JIT) production networks. These JIT systems are now susceptible to closed manufacturing facilities, ports and borders due to the COVID-19 crisis. A March survey by the Institute for Supply Management found that nearly 75% of business respondents have experienced supply chain disruptions and more than 80% believe they will in the future. More on this can be found [here](https://www.ism.org/press-releases/2020/04/01/supply-chain-disruptions).

**TAKE-OUT FOOD DURING THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS** – Florida Trend reports that when Governor Ron DeSantis ordered restaurants to close their dining rooms in mid-March, the industry went on hold, with a million workers at risk. The only food that restaurants could sell would have to be taken home and many dining venues scrambled to enter an area they long avoided — takeout. In the last decade, UberEats, GrubHub, Door Dash and others have brought any restaurant to the willfully homebound. That has only intensified during the pandemic. [Coronavirus take out trends](https://www.floridatrend.com/news/coronavirus-takeout-trends) have included entrees large enough to feed a family, restaurants selling produce and dry goods and smarter food packaging.

**NEWS ITEMS WANTED!** – Please send your business news items to [Joanne Magley](mailto:joanne@volusia.com). If you wish to be removed from this weekly broadcast, please let us know.